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COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION
OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES UNDER ARTICLE 9 OF THE CONVENTION

Initial and second periodic reports of States parties due in 1996-1998

Addendum

UZBEKISTAN*

[27 December 1999]

* The present report brings together in a single document the initial and second periodic reports of Uzbekistan, which were due on 28 October 1996 and 28 October 1999 respectively.

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NATIONAL REPORT SUBMITTED IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

Part One

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. The Republic of Uzbekistan has an area of 447,400 sq. km. The country includes the Republic of Karakalpakstan, 12 regions and the city of Tashkent, 119 towns and 163 rural districts. The capital is Tashkent.

2. The population at the beginning of 1998 numbered 23.8 million, of whom 9 million (39.2 per cent) were town dwellers and 14.8 million (61.8 per cent) rural dwellers.

3. In 1998, life expectancy in Uzbekistan was 72.7 years for women and 68.1 years for men. The infant mortality rate in 1998 was 22.4 per 1,000 births and maternal mortality 28.6 per 100,000.

4. Uzbekistan's population growth is chiefly attributable to natural increase, i.e. consistently high numbers of births (between 640,000 and 660,000 children born yearly). This can be seen from the pattern of the principal determinant of population growth - namely, the birth rate. For many years the nationwide crude birth rate remained at the level of 33-34 per 1,000, while in recent years it has dropped significantly - to 23.2 per 1,000 in 1998. High birth rates have only been maintained in Surkhan-Darya, Kashka-Darya, Djizak and Namangan regions, i.e., in predominantly rural areas.

State political structure

5. The Republic of Uzbekistan was created on 31 August 1991 on the territory of the former Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic, which formed part of the USSR. The acquisition of State independence and sovereignty was followed by a process of radical reforms and political transformation.

6. The Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan, adopted on 8 December 1992, reflects the will, spirit, social awareness and culture of the people. We should note, first of all, its commitment to the common values of all humankind and the universally recognized principles and norms of international law. It is free of the limitations of a single political ideology, of the opposition of classes, of the diktat of parties or of the oppressive domination of the State over its citizens. Taking the role of leading reformer during the difficult transition period, the State is now acting as guarantor of the observance of human rights and freedoms.

7. The Constitution incorporates the fundamental provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

8. The Constitution establishes the principle of the separation of powers into a legislature, an executive and a judiciary.

Legislature

9. Legislative power is exercised by the Oliy Majlis (Parliament of the Republic), the highest representative body. The procedure governing the composition and legal status of the Parliament of the Republic of Uzbekistan is laid down in the Constitution (arts. 76-88), the Act on Elections to the Oliy Majlis and the Act on the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

10. Article 83 of the Constitution states that the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan shall enact statutes, decisions and other instruments. A majority of the votes of all the deputies of the Oliy Majlis shall be required to enact a statute. Promulgation of statutes and other regulatory instruments shall be a mandatory condition of their entry into force.

Executive

11. The President of the Republic of Uzbekistan is the head of State and head of the Executive. The President is also Chair of the Cabinet of Ministers (arts. 89-98 of the Constitution).

12. The President of the Republic of Uzbekistan is elected by the citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan for a five-year term on the basis of universal, equal and direct suffrage by secret ballot. In accordance with the Act on the Election of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, candidates for the office of President of the Republic of Uzbekistan must be Uzbek citizens aged at least 35 years and fluent in the State language and must have been permanently resident in the territory of Uzbekistan for at least 10 years prior to the presidential election in question.

13. In accordance with article 93 of the Constitution, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan shall act as guarantor of citizens' rights and freedoms, of the Constitution and of the laws of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The Cabinet of Ministers is appointed by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan and ratified by the Oliy Majlis.

14. The Cabinet of Ministers manages the economy and oversees the social and spiritual direction of the country. It executes the Constitution and statutes, the decisions of the Oliy Majlis and the decrees, decisions and orders of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan and is empowered to issue, in line with current legislation, decisions and orders that are binding on all authorities, enterprises, organizations, officials and citizens throughout the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Judiciary

15. The judiciary in Uzbekistan is independent of the legislature and the executive, political parties and other public associations (arts. 106-116 of the Constitution).

16. Judicial authority in the Republic is exercised by the courts:

(a) The constitutional court of the Republic of Uzbekistan, which hears cases relating to the constitutionality of instruments promulgated by the legislature and the executive;

(b) The Supreme Court of the Republic of Uzbekistan, which is the highest judicial body in the civil, criminal and administrative court hierarchy;

(c) The Higher Economic Court of the Republic of Uzbekistan, which settles disputes of an economic nature;

(d) The Supreme Court of the Republic of Karakalpakstan;

(e) The Economic Court of the Republic of Karakalpakstan; and

(f) The regional, Tashkent city, district, city and economic courts.

17. In accordance with article 112 of the Constitution and the Act on the Courts, judges are independent and subject only to the law and it is an offence to interfere in any way in the judges' exercise of their duties. The inviolability of judges is guaranteed by law. The presidents and members of the Supreme Court and the Higher Economic Court may not be deputies in the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Judges, including district judges, may not be members of political parties or movements, nor may they occupy any other remunerated position.

18. Beside the supreme representative and executive bodies of State power - the Oliy Majlis, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Cabinet of Ministers - the system of State power also embraces the local authorities responsible for dealing with social issues at the region, district and city level: the councils of people's deputies and the khokims. Their powers and prerogatives are also enshrined in the Constitution and relevant statutes. The khokims at all levels exercise their powers according to the principle of undivided authority.

19. Decisions taken by khokims acting within the limits of their powers are binding on all enterprises, institutions, organizations, associations, officials and citizens within the territory concerned (art. 104 of the Constitution).

20. The core institutions of a parliamentary democracy and a State governed by the rule of law have been created: the Constitutional Court, the Parliamentary Institute for Monitoring Current Legislation, the Office of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsman), and the National Human Rights Centre of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Foreign policy

21. Uzbekistan's foreign policy is based on the rules and principles enshrined in the Constitution and in the Acts on the International Treaties of the Republic of Uzbekistan, on Defence, on the Main Principles of Foreign Policy and on the Military Doctrine of the Republic

of Uzbekistan and on the purposes and principles of the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), as well as on the commitments entered into by the Republic of Uzbekistan under international treaties and agreements ratified by the Oliy Majlis.

22. As a full member of the international community and in accordance with the Constitution (art. 17), the Republic of Uzbekistan is competent to form alliances and enter into commonwealths and other inter-State arrangements, and to leave them if they turn into military or political blocs, given that the Acts on the Main Principles of Foreign Policy and on the Military Doctrine of the Republic of Uzbekistan both exclude participation in military and political blocs.

23. On 2 March 1992, Uzbekistan became a full member of the United Nations. Since independence, Uzbekistan has established diplomatic relations with more than 105 States. As of 1998, Uzbekistan had been recognized as an independent State by 145 States.

24. The Republic of Uzbekistan is a member of the Commonwealth of Independent States, OSCE, the Economic Cooperation Organization, the Non-Aligned Movement, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), and the Black Sea Economic Cooperation organization and other organizations.

Economic situation

25. The geography of Uzbekistan is a combination of mountains and foothills, desert areas and fertile valleys, with a wealth of natural resources.

26. Uzbekistan is rich in minerals and raw materials and has the world's greatest resources of gold, silver and certain other rare-earth metals. Some 100 different minerals have been identified in the Republic, concentrated in 2,700 deposits. Practically the entire Mendeleev periodic table is represented. According to information provided by foreign experts, Uzbekistan's total potential wealth in minerals and raw materials amounts to US$ 3.3 trillion. Every year, mineral resources to a value of some US$ 5.5 billion are exploited, while, every year, the country's reserves grow by US$ 6-7 billion.

27. The country has large deposits of gas, oil and coal, and also extensive hydroelectric resources, which are of great importance for its economy. Nearly 74 per cent of the liquid gas reserves of the entire Central Asian region, 31 per cent of its oil, 40 per cent of its natural gas and 55 per cent of its coal are to be found in Uzbekistan.

28. Industrial enterprises have been created and set in operation in Uzbekistan, representing virtually all sectors of industry, from heavy industry - engineering, aviation and motor vehicle assembly - to branches of light industry, the industrial processing of agricultural produce and science-based production.

29. The Republic of Uzbekistan boasts one of Central Asia's largest power supply grids, with a total of 37 power stations. The electrical power generated at these stations not only meets the needs of the country's domestic economy, it is also exported to neighbouring States.

30 A total of 4.25 million hectares is currently under irrigation. The country's potential reserve of irrigated land measures some 15 million hectares. With its soil and climate conditions, Uzbekistan can reap three harvests a year. The country is fully able to meet its food needs with domestic production.

31 The main agricultural product is cotton. Every year, 4 million tons of cotton are gathered in Uzbekistan, from which 1.3 million tons of cotton fibre are prepared.

32 The combined length of the country's national rail network, Ubekiston Temir Yullari, is 3,655 km, with 680 km of dual track and 489 km of electrified line.

33 Uzbekistan's gas supply grid comprises nine trunk pipelines with a total length of 12,000 km. The pipeline is a single-line system feeding into the common system of gas pipelines of the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States, through which gas can be delivered to the States of Central Asia, Russia and Ukraine and also to European countries.

34 Major regional water supply systems have been laid in Uzbekistan, with a total pipeline length of 1,400 km and an installed capacity of 1.6 million cu.m per day, sufficient to meet the industrial and drinking water needs of all regions of the country.

35 Uzbekistan has a telecommunications network. More than 1.5 million subscribers use the country's telephone services.

36 Uzbekistan's construction sector has great potential, with the ability to carry out construction and assembly work to a total of 100-110 billion som (US$ 2.7-3 billion) per year.

37 Total gross domestic product (GDP) in 1997 was 987.4 billion som. GDP in real market prices was 298.5 billion som, or 13,110.3 som per capita. In 1997 the GDP index was 0.425 per cent, annual GDP growth 5.2 per cent and the increase in per capita GDP 3.2 per cent. Average monthly inflation in 1997 was 6.1 per cent. The number of unemployed, based on the economically active population, was 40,100 at the end of 1998.

Education

38 The country's literacy rate is 97.7 per cent. Most of the illiterate are in the older age groups - 70 and over. Only 0.3 per cent of men and women aged between 16 and 29 are illiterate. Of the population aged 65 and over, 30.2 per cent of women and 17.7 per cent of men are illiterate.

39 At the current time, 986 out of every 1,000 persons in employment have received some form of education. Of these, 142 (15 per cent) are specialists with full or partial higher education, 199 (21 per cent) have specialized secondary education, 480 (50.6 per cent) have general secondary education and 127 (13.4 per cent) have incomplete secondary education. There are 58 institutions of higher education in Uzbekistan. One in four people working in the national economy has received higher or specialized secondary education.

Health

40. In 1991-1992, the Ministry of Health, together with the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Uzbekistan, changed its approach to the funding of health care. Budgetary resources are allocated on a per capita basis and the funding of outpatient centres and polyclinics is based on the number of people they serve and of hospitals on the number of patients. Introduction of these measures has brought a halt to the continued expansion of a health sector heavily reliant on hospital services. The budget share allocated for the funding of hospital services dropped from 80 to 60 per cent, in favour of outpatient services, where funding increased by between 8 and 10 per cent to 30-40 per cent.

Part Two

INFORMATION RELATING TO ARTICLES 1-7 OF THE CONVENTION

Article 1

Policy of the Republic of Uzbekistan with regard to racial discrimination and its legislative framework

41. The national policy of the Republic of Uzbekistan is based on:

(a) The Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan and other legislative instruments;

(b) International treaties in the area of human rights and humanitarian law ratified by the Republic of Uzbekistan,

(c) Resolutions and recommendations of international organizations to which the Republic of Uzbekistan belongs;

(d) Inter-State agreements, directly or indirectly regulating the status of national minorities in the economic, cultural, political and other spheres;

(e) The national programme of action in the area of human rights (adopted in 1997),

(f) The tradition of ethnic and religious tolerance which has developed in Uzbekistan as a consequence of many centuries of coexistence of various national and religious communities, as reflected in the country's works of literature and philosophy.

42. The national policy of the Republic of Uzbekistan has the following components:

(a) Actions to create an atmosphere of ethnic harmony and tolerance in society;

(b) The development of institutional and legislative machinery to safeguard individual and collective human rights, including those of racial, national and ethnic minorities;

(c) Measures designed to preserve the cultural identity of national minorities and their integration into Uzbek society;

(d) Measures to ensure the proportional representation of national groups in all areas of public life.

43. The vast majority of the legislative instruments of the Republic of Uzbekistan contain articles reaffirming equality of opportunity and the rights of citizens to equal treatment before the law, irrespective of race, nationality, language and religion.

44. The Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan is the primary legislative instrument ensuring that the fundamental human rights and freedoms are given effect on the basis of equality in the political, economic, social, cultural and other spheres of public life. Article 8 of the Constitution states that the Uzbek nation is constituted by the citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan irrespective of their nationality. Article 15 of the Act on the Principles of the State Independence of the Republic of Uzbekistan provides that all citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan, irrespective of their nation and ethnic group, shall have identical civil rights and enjoy the protection of the Constitution of Uzbekistan and its statutes.

Demographic make-up of the population of the Republic of Uzbekistan and problems causing conflicts between ethnic groups

Total numbers of permanent residents of Uzbekistan as at 1 January 1998
(thousands of persons)

Nationality	Total	%	Urban	Rural
Uzbek	18 361.8	77.2	5 728	12 633.8
Russian	1 244.3	5.2	1 176.9	67.4
Tajik	1 145.9	4.8	388.2	757.7
Kazakh	957.2	4.0	397	560.2
Tatar	324.2	1.4	296.6	27.6
Kyrgyz	212.8	0.9	26.6	186.2
Turkmen	141.4	0.6	26.6	114.8
Korean	1 123.2	4.7	666.9	453.3
Ukrainian	113.4	0.5	100.2	13.2
Armenian	46.0	0.2	44.7	1.3
Azerbaijani	41.0	0.2	32.5	8.5
Belarusian	24.5	0.1	20.2	4.3
Jewish	15.6	0.1	14.9	0.7
German	10.3	0.1	8	2.3
Moldovan	5.3	0.0	3	2.3
Georgian	4.1	0.0	3.3	0.8
Lithuanian	1.3	0.0	1.2	0.1
Estonian	0.7	0.0	0.6	0.1
Latvian	0.3	0.0	0.2	0.1
Others	1 122.2	4.7	720.1	402.1
Totals	23 773.3	100.0	9 391.9	14 381.4

45. Although no instances of inter-ethnic conflict have been reported in the Republic of Uzbekistan over the period since its accession to the Convention, it is impossible to exclude the possibility of isolated cases of inter-ethnic tension, as a consequence both of the multi-ethnic make-up of the country and of the difficult process of finding a new national identity after the break-up of the Soviet Union. Incidents of this nature are, as a rule, confined to the domestic area and have no connection with the activity of any State or public institutions.

Article 2

Measures to implement the provisions of article 2, paragraph 1, of the Convention

46. The undertaking given by the Republic of Uzbekistan to engage in no act or practice of racial discrimination finds reflection:

(a) In the provisions of the Constitution which reaffirm the equality of citizens, irrespective of race, nationality, language and other attributes (art. 18 of the Constitution), to be respected unconditionally by the State, its bodies, and officials (art. 15 of the Constitution). The State thereby enters into an obligation not to admit discrimination on the basis of race and nationality. This provision was developed in other legislative instruments of Uzbekistan; thus, article 6 of the Labour Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan prohibits discrimination in labour relations, stating that all citizens have equal opportunities with regard to the possession and exercise of labour rights, and that the imposition of any limitations or the granting of privileges in the area of labour relations on the basis of race, nationality, language, religion and other considerations not related to the qualifications of employees and the results of their work are unacceptable and shall be deemed discrimination;

(b) In the principle of respect for the culture of all the peoples of Uzbekistan. The State undertakes to ensure a respectful attitude to the languages, customs and traditions of the peoples and nationalities residing in its territory and to create conditions for their development (art. 4 of the Constitution);

(c) In the priority of the universally accepted norms of international law, recognized in the preamble to the Constitution and in other legislative instruments. This means that the provisions of the Convention are directly applicable in the territory of Uzbekistan. In addition, by joining OSCE, the Republic of Uzbekistan entered into obligations relating to national minorities (art. VII of the Principles of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, Helsinki, 1975).

47. The actions of State bodies relating to obligations in the area of racial discrimination are underpinned by:

(a) The recognition in the Constitution and other legislative instruments of obligations relating to racial discrimination;

(b) The independence of the judiciary as the chief mechanism for setting in place the legislative foundations of the national policy of the Republic of Uzbekistan (art. 106 of the Constitution). Article 19 of the Constitution provides that citizens' rights and freedoms,

enshrined in the Constitution and the statutes, shall be inviolable and that no one shall be entitled to deny or restrict the rights and freedoms of citizens without recourse to the courts. Under the Act on Legal Recourse against Actions and Decisions Violating the Rights and Freedoms of Citizens, all citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan, irrespective of race and nationality, as well as aliens and stateless persons, shall be entitled to bring complaints before the courts, if they consider that their rights and freedoms have been violated through the unlawful actions (decisions) of State bodies, enterprises, institutions, organizations, public associations, local authorities or officials (art. 1). Persons who believe that they have been subjected to discrimination at work may submit applications to the courts for the removal of such discrimination and for compensation for the material and moral injury (Labour Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan, art. 6);

(c) Measures to ensure freedom of the media (art. 67 of the Constitution) and to promote the development of civil society, as mechanisms for public monitoring of the activities of the authorities and of individuals which might be racially discriminatory in nature.

48. The undertaking not to sponsor, defend or support racial discrimination is reflected:

(a) In the prohibition of the organization of political parties on racial and national principles (art. 57 of the Constitution), and also of public associations whose activities are directed at the propagation of racial and religious division (art. 3 of the Act on Public Associations);

(b) In the interdiction on the use of religion for the purpose of fomenting enmity, hatred and ethnic division (art. 5 of the Act on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations);

(c) In the ban on the use of the media for the purpose of propagating national, racial and religious hatred (art. 6 of the Act on the Mass Media);

(d) In the prohibition of efforts to prevent citizens from exercising their right to a free choice of language in communication, the upbringing of children and education (art. 24 of the Act on the State Language).

49. In addition, this undertaking is enshrined in the provisions of a number of inter-State instruments to which the Republic of Uzbekistan is a signatory, including the Declaration on the Development and Enhancement of Cooperation in All Areas between the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Russian Federation, which establishes that both States shall take all necessary steps to preclude the occurrence in their territories of any discrimination against national minorities and shall take effective measures to prevent the fomenting of hostility or the incitement to violence against persons or groups on the basis of their racial or national affiliation.

50. A review is being carried out of Government, national and local policies and any statutes and regulatory instruments conducive to the creation and support of racial discrimination are being amended, rescinded or nullified. A review of State policy in the area of the integration of national minorities has been conducted in the context of such research projects as those on the

remigration processes in the Republic of Uzbekistan (Public Opinion Centre, 1998), on the integration of national religious minorities into Uzbek society (National Human Rights Centre of the Republic of Uzbekistan, with the support of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 1998) and others.

51. In accordance with its statutes, the Parliamentary Institute for Monitoring Current Legislation has, as one of its chief tasks, the study and elaboration of proposals to improve and to monitor current legislation prohibiting racial discrimination. In accordance with the Act on the Parliamentary Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsman) of 24 April 1997, the Parliamentary Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsman) is responsible for conducting, and ensuring the conduct of, parliamentary monitoring of the current legislation prohibiting racial discrimination, to ensure that it is effectively implemented and observed.

52. Since independence, the Republic of Uzbekistan has adopted no statutes or regulatory instruments conducive to the creation and support of racial discrimination. In the process of improving the country's corpus of law and bringing it into line with international legal standards relating to the elimination of racial discrimination, a number of statutes have been redrafted. Thus, the requirement that managers and employees of the civil service and employees in the services sector should be sufficiently proficient in the State language of Uzbekistan to be able to perform their official duties, contained in the 1989 Act on the State Language, has been dropped from the new version of the Act adopted in 1995. Although this requirement was not in conflict with the status of the Uzbek language as the State language, knowledge of the State language as a mandatory condition for political and social activity could have had discriminatory consequences for members of national minorities and this requirement was therefore excluded from the new version of the Act.

53. The undertaking to prohibit racial discrimination by all possible means, including legislation, is reflected in the Criminal Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan, which contains provisions on liability for deliberate actions injurious to the national honour and dignity, perpetrated with a view to exciting hatred, intolerance or division towards any groups of the population on the basis of nationality, race or ethnic affiliation, for the imposition of direct or indirect restrictions or the granting of direct or indirect privileges on the basis of national, racial and ethnic affiliation and also for such actions when performed by responsible officials, acting in collusion, or by groups of persons (art. 156), and for genocide (art. 153). These obligations are also reflected in the Code on Administrative Liability of the Republic of Uzbekistan, which contains provisions on liability for contravening the rights of citizens to the free choice of language in the upbringing of children and education and for placing obstacles and restrictions on the use of language (art. 42).

54. The undertaking to encourage integrationist multiracial organizations and to take other measures designed to eliminate barriers between races is reflected:

(a) In the designation of the strengthening of peace and friendship among peoples as one of the goals of the creation of public associations in the Republic of Uzbekistan (art. 3 of the Act on Public Associations);

(b) In the institution of the "Dustlik" ("Friendship") order, awarded to those working in the fields of science, culture, education, health care, the media and social welfare for contributions to ethnic harmony among the peoples living in the Republic of Uzbekistan;

(c) In the creation of and support for the International Cultural Centre of the Republic of Uzbekistan, opened in 1992 to coordinate the work of the national cultural centres;

(d) In the creation of and support for friendship associations with foreign countries, primarily those which are the historical homelands of the national minorities living in Uzbekistan: Russia, Korea, Ukraine, Latvia, Poland, Azerbaijan and others; their work is coordinated by the National Association for International Cultural and Educational Ties of the Republic of Uzbekistan;

(e) In the conduct of days of culture of the States which are the historical homelands of certain national minorities of Uzbekistan (thus, between November 1997 and November 1998, days of culture of Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan were held in Uzbekistan).

Article 3

Condemnation of racial segregation and apartheid and the undertaking to prevent, prohibit and eradicate all practices of this nature

55. The Republic of Uzbekistan bases its foreign policy on international norms, including those which condemn racial segregation and apartheid. The Act on the Main Principles of the Foreign Policy of the Republic of Uzbekistan stresses that the foreign policy and international activities of the Republic of Uzbekistan shall be based on the principles and purposes of the United Nations and OSCE, and also on the obligations flowing from the international treaties and agreements to which the Republic of Uzbekistan is party and which have been ratified by the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan (art. 1).

56. As a member of OSCE, the Republic of Uzbekistan has assumed obligations relating to national minorities (art. VII of the principles of the Final Act, Helsinki, 1975). Questions relating to ethnic harmony in Uzbekistan and in the region were discussed during the visit to Tashkent by the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, Mr. Max van der Stoel, on 2-3 June 1998, at his meetings in the Oliy Majlis, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Ministry of National Education and the International Cultural Centre. At these meetings, the Government of Uzbekistan reaffirmed, yet again, its commitment to the principles of the promotion of tolerance and ethnic harmony.

Article 4

Legislative measures to eradicate all incitements to, or acts of, racial discrimination

57. The prohibition of the incitement to racial and national discrimination is contained, inter alia, in article 57 of the Constitution, article 3 of the Act on Public Associations, article 5 of the Act on the Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations, article 6 of the Act on the Mass Media, article 24 of the Act on the State Language.

58. Penalties for contravening these articles are stipulated in articles 141, 153 and 156 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Under article 141, a direct or indirect infringement of or restriction on rights or the granting of direct or indirect privileges to citizens on the basis of race, nationality or language shall be punishable by a fine of up to 25 times the minimum wage or deprivation of a specified right for a period of up to three years. If the same actions are accompanied by violence, they shall be punishable by attachment of earnings for a period of two-three years or rigorous imprisonment for up to six months or deprivation of liberty for a period of three-five years.

59. Under the provisions of article 156 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan, deliberate actions injurious to the national honour and dignity perpetrated with a view to exciting hatred, intolerance or division toward any population groups on national, racial or ethnic grounds, as well as the imposition of direct or indirect restrictions or the granting of direct or indirect privileges on the basis of national, racial and ethnic affiliation shall be punishable by deprivation of liberty for a period of up to five years. The same actions committed by responsible officials, acting in collusion, or by groups of persons shall be punishable by deprivation of liberty for a period of 5-10 years.

60. These crimes are classified in the following groups:

(a) Acts injurious to the national honour and dignity;

(b) Acts offensive to the feelings of citizens in accordance with their religious or atheistic convictions;

(c) The imposition of direct or indirect restrictions on the rights of citizens on the basis of their national, racial, ethnic or religious affiliation;

(d) The granting of direct or indirect privileges on the basis of national, racial or ethnic affiliation or attitude to religion.

61. In the incitement of national, racial, ethnic or religious hatred, the chosen target may be an individual or a group of persons of a given nationality or professing a given religion. The means of inciting hatred, intolerance or division may differ. Examples include accusations of treachery, cowardice, narrow-mindedness, improbity or atheism. On the other hand, the victims may also be accused of religious intolerance, the desire to dominate over other peoples, the belief that they are divinely anointed, parasitism, exploitation of other peoples and so forth.

62. Restricting the rights of citizens on the basis of their national, racial or religious affiliation may apply to any rights accorded to citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Such restrictions may include the refusal of employment or of admission to an educational institution because of membership to a particular nationality or profession of a particular religion.

63. The substance of this crime also includes instances where citizens have been granted privileges on the basis of their national, racial or religious affiliation, such as the provision of

housing on a preferential basis to citizens of a particular nationality or religion, etc. The commission of this crime (except as provided under article 156 of the Criminal Code) is also categorized as official misconduct.

64. Article 153 of the Criminal Code stipulates a penalty of deprivation of liberty for a period of 10-20 years or death with the confiscation of property for genocide, namely, the deliberate creation of conditions of life designed to ensure the total or partial physical extermination of a particular group of persons on the basis of national, ethnic, racial or religious attributes, their total or partial physical extermination, enforced birth control or the transfer of children from one group of people to another, as well as the issuing of instructions for the performance of such actions.

65. Accordingly, three types of genocide are defined: physical, manifested in the physical extermination of persons of a particular national, ethnic, racial or religious group; social and economic, consisting in the creation of conditions of life conducive to such extermination; and biological, including actions designed to prevent procreation among the members of certain groups. The substance of the crime in this case is constituted not only by the act of genocide itself, but also by a conspiracy with the aim of its commission, manifested in the direct and public incitement of its perpetration, the issuing of instructions for the perpetration of such actions, the attempt to commit genocide and complicity therein.

66. Article 42 of the Code on Administrative Responsibility of the Republic of Uzbekistan contains a provision which is likewise designed to eradicate any incitement to racial discrimination or such discrimination itself, stating that the violation of the rights of citizens to the free choice of language in upbringing and education, the imposition of obstacles and limitations to the use of languages and disrespect for the State language and also for the other languages of the nations and nationalities living in the Republic of Uzbekistan shall be punishable by fines from one to two times the amount of the minimum wage. It further states that those liable may be officials and citizens above the age of 16 and that offences of this kind are considered by judges dealing with non-indictable offences.

Article 5

Measures undertaken to prohibit and to eliminate racial discrimination and to guarantee the right of everyone, without distinction as to race, colour, or national or ethnic origin, to equality before the law, notably in the enjoyment of the following rights:

(a) The right to equal treatment before the tribunals and all other organs administering justice

67. The right of all persons resident in the territory of Uzbekistan to equal protection from the courts, irrespective of their national, racial and ethnic affiliation, is guaranteed by article 5 of the Act on the Courts.

68. The requirement that justice should be administered on the basis of the equality of citizens before the law and the courts is enshrined in article 1 of the Act on Legal Recourse

against Actions and Decisions Violating the Rights and Freedoms of Citizens, article 3 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan, article 16 of the Code of Criminal Procedure and article 1 of the Code of Civil Procedure and elsewhere.

69. The equality of citizens before the law is defined by article 3 of the Code of Liability for Non-Indictable Offences as the fundamental principle of the legislation on such liability.

70. To ensure the full exercise of their right to equality before the courts, persons belonging to ethnic or linguistic minorities and not proficient in the State language or the language of the majority of the population of the area in which legal proceedings are being conducted, shall be provided with an interpreter. This right is established in article 11 of the Act on the State Language and article 7 of the Act on the Courts. The latter states that legal proceedings in the Republic of Uzbekistan shall be conducted in the Uzbek or Karakalpak languages or in the language of the majority of the population of a given area and that persons participating in the proceedings who are not proficient in the language in which the proceedings are being conducted shall have the right to be fully apprised of the record of the case and to participate in the court proceedings through an interpreter and the right to speak in the court in their native language.

71. The arrangements for the exercise of this right are established in article 20 of the Code of Criminal Procedure and articles 294 and 300 of the Code of Liability for Non-Indictable Offences. Article 294 states that a person subject to proceedings for a non-indictable offence shall have the right to speak in his native language and to employ the services of an interpreter. Under article 300, the interpreter must be appointed by the body (official) responsible for the conduct of the proceedings. Only persons with no interest in the issue of the case and fluent in the language may serve as interpreters. The functions of interpreter and person examining the case, attorney, witness, etc., may not be exercised by one and the same person.

72. This rule is reflected in article 9 of the Code of Civil Procedure, which states that legal proceedings in civil cases in the Republic of Uzbekistan shall be conducted in the Uzbek or Karakalpak languages or in the language of the majority of the population of a given area and that persons not proficient in the language in which the proceedings are being conducted shall have the right to be fully apprised of the record of proceedings and to give testimony and provide explanations, to appear before the court, to make statements and to submit petitions in their native language, and also to employ the services of an interpreter in accordance with the procedure established by this Code. It also states that the writs served on persons participating in the case shall be in their native language or in another language in which they are proficient.

(b) <u>The right to security of person and protection by the State against violence or bodily harm, whether inflicted by government officials or by any individual, group or institution</u>

73. This right is established in article 156 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Deliberate acts injurious to the national honour and dignity, perpetrated with a view to inciting hatred, intolerance or division towards any population groups on the basis of national,

racial or ethnic principles, as well as the imposition of direct or indirect restrictions or the granting of direct or indirect privileges on the basis of national, racial and ethnic affinity shall be punishable by deprivation of liberty for a period of up to five years.

74. The same acts perpetrated, first, in a manner hazardous to the life of other persons, second, with the infliction of grievous bodily harm, third, with the enforced expulsion of citizens from their permanent homes, fourth, by responsible officials, fifth, by prior collusion or by a group of persons, shall be punishable by deprivation of liberty for a period of 5 to 10 years.

(c) Political rights, in particular the right to participate in elections - to vote and to stand for election - on the basis of universal and equal suffrage, to take part in the Government as well as in the conduct of public affairs at any level and to have equal access to public service

75. The core legislative instruments of the Republic of Uzbekistan guaranteeing the right of citizens to participate in elections are the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Act on the Election of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Act on Elections to the Oliy Majlis, the Act on Elections to Regional, District and Municipal Councils of People's Deputies and the Act on Guarantees of the Suffrage of Citizens, and a number of other instruments.

76. In accordance with those instruments, all citizens of Uzbekistan who have reached the age of 18 at the time of the elections, irrespective of their origin, social and material status, racial and national affiliation, sex, education, language, attitude to religion and type and nature of occupation, shall have equal suffrage. Judicial protection of the suffrage of citizens irrespective of their racial and ethnic affiliation is guaranteed by article 20 of the Act on Guarantees of the Suffrage of Citizens.

77. Under article 3 of the Act on Elections to the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan, all citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan have equal suffrage, irrespective of their racial and national affiliation, language and religion. The same principle is enshrined in respect of presidential elections in article 2 of the Act on the Election of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The provision that the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan should be fluent in the Uzbek language (art. 90 of the Constitution, art. 1 of the Act on the Election of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan) cannot be considered discriminatory, since fluency in the Uzbek language presupposes neither that this language should be the President's native language nor that he should be an Uzbek by nationality.

78. There are no legislative or other impediments to the participation of members of ethnic minorities in the territory of the Republic of Uzbekistan in the administrative bodies of different levels. Thus, 15 nations are represented among the deputies in the Oliy Majlis: Uzbek - 211, Russian - 10, Tajik - 5, Ukrainian - 3, Karakalpak - 6, Kazakh - 6, Kyrgyz - 1, Turkmen - 1, Tatar - 1, Korean - 1, Jewish - 1, Ossetian - 1, Armenian - 1, Gagauz -1, Persian - 1 (16.5 per cent of the total number of deputies are members of national minorities).

(d) Other civil rights, in particular:

(i) The right to freedom of movement and residence within the border of the State

79. Under article 28 of the Constitution, citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan have the right to freedom of movement throughout the territory of Uzbekistan and to enter and to leave the Republic of Uzbekistan, except where there are restrictions established by law.

80. Aliens and stateless persons shall, when in the territory of the Republic of Uzbekistan, enjoy rights and freedoms in accordance with the rules of international law (art. 23 of the Constitution).

(ii) The right to leave any country, including one's own, and to return to one's country

81. Citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan shall have the right to leave the territory of the Republic (art. 28 of the Constitution); residence abroad by citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan shall not entail the loss of citizenship of the Republic of Uzbekistan (art. 7 of the Act on Citizenship). To facilitate the procedure guaranteeing exercise of this right, the Republic of Uzbekistan has signed a number of inter-State agreements, primarily within the framework of the Commonwealth of Independent States, designed to simplify to the maximum extent procedures relating to the movement and the residence of the citizens of one State in the territory of another State, and to guarantee the right of citizens of these States to travel freely and without visas, the payment of duties, registration formalities or any other restrictions.

(iii) The right to nationality

82. The right to citizenship of the Republic of Uzbekistan is accorded to all persons permanently resident in the territory of the country, irrespective of their racial and national affiliation (art. 4 of the Act on Citizenship). Aliens and stateless persons may, upon application, be granted citizenship of the Republic of Uzbekistan, irrespective of their racial and national affiliation.

83. The following conditions apply to the granting of citizenship of the Republic of Uzbekistan:

(a) Renunciation of foreign citizenship;

(b) Permanent residence in the territory of the Republic of Uzbekistan over the previous five years (this rule shall not apply to persons wishing to become citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan who were born in its territory and can prove that at least one parent or grandparent was born in its territory and who do not hold the citizenship of other States);

(c) A lawful source of subsistence;

(d) Recognition of and compliance with the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

84. The above requirements may be waived in exceptional circumstances by decision of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan in respect of individuals who have rendered outstanding services to the Republic of Uzbekistan or achieved high distinction in the field of science, technology or culture, or who practise professions or hold qualifications of interest to the Republic of Uzbekistan.

85 An application for the granting of citizenship of the Republic of Uzbekistan shall be rejected if the applicant is campaigning for the forcible change of the constitutional order of the Republic of Uzbekistan or is serving a sentence of imprisonment for acts prosecuted under the law of the Republic of Uzbekistan (art. 17 of the Act on Citizenship).

86. Matters relating to the interpretation of article 4 of the Act on Citizenship of the Republic of Uzbekistan were considered at the regular session of the Constitutional Court on 27 October 1998. The Constitutional Court ruled that, in accordance with article 4, paragraph 3, of the Act on Citizenship of the Republic of Uzbekistan, persons who have acquired citizenship in accordance with the law shall be citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Matters relating to the granting of citizenship of the Republic of Uzbekistan to aliens and stateless persons are regulated by article 17 of the Act, which establishes that stateless persons may, upon application, be granted citizenship of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Accordingly, under article 4, paragraph 3, of the Act, stateless persons may only be citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan after their acquisition of citizenship of the Republic of Uzbekistan, that is to say, after they have been granted citizenship of the Republic of Uzbekistan in accordance with the provisions of article 17 of the Act. In accordance with article 93, paragraph 19, of the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan and article 30 of the Act, the decision to grant citizenship of the Republic of Uzbekistan to stateless persons shall be taken by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan. In this manner, the persons mentioned in article 4, paragraph 1, of the Act are understood to be citizens of the Uzbek SSR who have manifested a desire to become citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

(iv) The right to marriage and choice of spouse

87 This right is regulated by the Family Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan. All citizens of Uzbekistan have the right to enter freely into marriage and to choose their spouse (art. 14). The racial, national and ethnic affiliation of intending spouses is not listed among the impediments to marriage (art. 16). No direct or indirect restriction on rights shall be permitted in family relations, nor may any direct or indirect privileges be granted in the conclusion of marriage on the basis of race, nationality, language and other attributes (art. 3). Members of the nations and peoples living in Uzbekistan have the right to follow their own customs and traditions in the regulation of family relations where the country's legislation lacks corresponding rules and so long as these traditions do not run counter to the principles of the legislation of the Republic of Uzbekistan (art. 8). The proportion of inter-ethnic marriages is fairly high in Uzbekistan (as high as 20 per cent in the larger cities).

88 By decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, 1998 was proclaimed "Year of the Family" and the Cabinet of Ministers adopted a State programme of measures to uphold the

interests of the family. Paragraph 2.25 of the State programme of measures, made provisions for the holding of a round table on the role of trade unions in the development of friendship and mutual understanding among nations and nationalities.

(v) The right to own property alone as well as in association with others

89 This right is established in article 36 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Neither the Act on Property in the Republic of Uzbekistan nor any other legislative instruments relating to property law contain any limitations on the ownership of property on the basis of racial, national, linguistic or religious affiliation. Thus, article 4 of the Act on Property in the Republic of Uzbekistan states that the right of ownership shall be enjoyed by citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan, collectives, their associations, public and religious organizations, family associations and other civic associations, local authorities, councils of people's deputies at all levels and their executive bodies, other States, international organizations, the bodies corporate and citizens of other States and stateless persons. Title to property may be held jointly by more than one party, be they bodies corporate or citizens, as well as stateless persons.

(vi) The right to inherit

90 Safeguards of this right are provided in article 36 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan and articles 1197-1199 of the Civil Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

(vii) The right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion

91 In accordance with article 29 of the Constitution, everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and conviction. Under article 31, freedom of conscience is guaranteed for all. Everyone has the right to profess any religion or to profess none. The imposition of religious views by force is proscribed. These provisions are fleshed out in article 3 of the Act on the Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations, which states that no coercion shall be applied to citizens in determining their attitude to religion, their profession or non-profession of religion, their participation or non-participation in worship, religious rites and ceremonies and whether or not they receive a religious education. It also provides that aliens and stateless persons shall enjoy the right to freedom of conscience and freedom of creed on an equal footing with citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

92 As at the beginning of 1998, 37 non-Muslim faiths were officially professed in Uzbekistan. These included, beside the Orthodox Church, the Catholic Church, the Evangelical Baptist Union (16 communities and 40 clergy), Seventh-Day Adventists (10 organizations and 12 clergy) and others (a total of 119 Christian communities); non-Christian faiths included Judaism, professed by Ashkenazi and Bukhara Jews (the former constituting 16 communities with 15 clergy), and also Buddhists, members of the Hare Krishna movement and others (a total of 37 faiths). As at the end of 1998, 1,258 religious organizations were registered in Uzbekistan, including 1,156 Muslim, 96 Christian and 6 Jewish organizations.

93 In his statement at the closing meeting of the one hundred and fifty-fifth session of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Executive Board,

the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Mr. Islam Karimov, said that, over the centuries, Uzbekistan had been a centre of interaction and coexistence of the most diverse religions, cultures and systems. Since ancient times, not only had different civilizations - Islamic, Christian, Judaic, Buddhist and some even more ancient - lived side by side but they had also complemented and enhanced one another. It was on this very land that, over many centuries, the world's cultures had been refined in a process of far-reaching mutual enrichment. It is entirely understandable therefore, that so many different religious movements and faiths should be represented in Uzbekistan. He stated with pride that, over the entire course of its history, the Uzbek people had not known and would not countenance religious conflicts, or the persecution of people on the grounds of nationality and religion. There had never been any manifestations of anti-Semitism. Throughout its history, the Uzbek people had always displayed tolerance and respect for the members of other peoples and faiths.

(viii) The right to freedom of opinion and expression

94 In the Republic of Uzbekistan, everyone has the right to freedom of thought, speech and conviction. Everyone has the right to seek, obtain and disseminate any information, save for information targeted against the constitutional order and subject to certain other restrictions provided by the law (art. 29 of the Constitution). Everyone has the right to freedom of expression in the media and freely to express his opinions and convictions (art. 3 of the Act on Mass Media). Censorship is prohibited by law (art. 67 of the Constitution, art. 4 of the Act on Mass Media).

95 The right to freedom of opinion and expression of all citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan without limitation on racial or national grounds does not mean that they are able to express opinions or convictions propagating racial or national supremacy (art. 6 of the Act on Mass Media).

(ix) The right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association

96 In accordance with article 34 of the Constitution, citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan have the right to form trade unions, political parties and other public associations and to participate in popular movements. No one may encroach upon the rights and freedoms or cast aspersions on persons constituting the minority opposition in political parties, public associations, popular movements, or representative authorities.

97 These principles are reflected in article 3 of the Act on Political Parties, which states that political parties shall be created and operate for the purpose of giving effect to the rights and freedoms of citizens on the basis of freedom of choice, freedom to join and to leave the parties, the equality of their members, autonomy, lawfulness and transparency; and, in article 1 of the Act on Public Associations, which states that public associations shall be voluntary formations which have come into existence by the free will of citizens who have united for the joint upholding of their rights, freedoms and lawful interests in politics, economics, social development, science, culture, the environment and other areas of life.

(e) Economic, social and cultural rights, in particular:

(i) The right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work, to protection against unemployment, to equal pay for equal work, to just and favourable remuneration

98. In accordance with article 37 of the Constitution, everyone shall have the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just conditions of work and to protection against unemployment. Article 6 of the Labour Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan prohibits discrimination in employment, stating that all citizens shall have equal opportunities in gaining and exercising their labour rights. The imposition of any limitations or the granting of privileges in the area of labour relations on the grounds of race, nationality, language, religion and other considerations not associated with the professional qualities of employees and the results of their work is unacceptable and shall be deemed discrimination.

(ii) The right to form and join trade unions

99. Citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan have the right to join together in trade unions (art. 34 of the Constitution). Article 2 of the Act on Trade Unions and the Rights and Guarantees for their Work states that working people and also persons studying in institutions of higher and secondary specialized education shall, without any distinction, have the right freely to form, by their own choice and without prior consent, trade unions and the right to join trade unions on condition that they comply with their statutes.

(iii) The right to housing

100. Article 2 of the Act on the Principles of the State Housing Policy states that the principal tasks of the State housing policy shall be to establish conditions under which each citizen, in accordance with his needs and abilities, should be able to build, gain ownership of, or rent housing and to provide municipal housing to citizens registered for that purpose who need better housing.

(iv) The right to public health, medical care, social security and social services

101. This right is established in articles 39 and 40 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan, which states that everyone shall have the right to social security in old age, in the event of disability or the loss of the breadwinner and in other circumstances proscribed by law (art. 39) and that everyone shall have the right to properly qualified medical attention (art. 40).

102. The Act on Social Protection for the Disabled in the Republic of Uzbekistan states that all disabled persons shall enjoy the full range of social, economic and individual rights and freedoms; discrimination against them is prohibited and shall be prosecuted under law (art. 2).

103. Article 13 of the Act on Public Health Care establishes that the State shall provide health care for its citizens irrespective of race, nationality, language and attitude to religion. The State shall guarantee protection of its citizens from discrimination regardless of any diseases from

which they might suffer. Article 44 of the same Act (which deals with the doctors' oath of the Republic of Uzbekistan) states that doctors, upon receiving their qualification, shall swear on oath that they will render medical assistance to any sick person irrespective of that person's sex, age, race, nationality, language, attitude to religion and faith. Article 14 of that Act establishes the right of aliens and stateless persons to health care. It states that aliens in the territory of the Republic of Uzbekistan shall be guaranteed the right to health care in accordance with the international treaties of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Stateless persons permanently resident in the Republic of Uzbekistan shall enjoy the right to health care on an equal footing with citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan, unless provided otherwise by international treaties of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

(v) The right to education and training

104. Under article 41 of the Constitution, everyone shall have the right to education and the State shall guarantee that general education is provided free of charge.

105. This provision is further developed in article 4 of the Education Act, which states that everyone shall be guaranteed equal rights to receive education, irrespective of sex, language, age, racial and national affiliation, convictions, attitude to religion, social status, place of residence and length of residence in the Republic of Uzbekistan.

106. Secondary education in the Republic of Uzbekistan is conducted in seven languages: Uzbek, Karakalpak, Russian, Kazakh, Turkmen, Tajik and Kyrgyz. The schools which teach in the languages of the national minorities shall, pursuant to an arrangement between the Ministry of People's Education of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the countries of the Commonwealth Independent States which are the historical homeland of these minorities, be provided with teaching programmes, textbooks and other teaching aids purchased in those countries.

107. In 1997, the Ministry of People's Education bought textbooks and other teaching aids for these schools in Kyrgyz (11 titles in a total quantity of 6,800 copies), Kazakh (47 titles in a total quantity of 493,000 copies) and Turkmen (49 titles in a total quantity of 63,400 copies).

108. Every year, the "Ukituvchi" publishing house publishes textbooks in Russian for Russian-medium schools in the following subjects: nature study, botany, geography, history and law. In 1997, four textbooks were published in a total of 171,000 copies in Russian and, in 1998, nine textbooks, in a total of 473,000 copies.

109. Pursuant to decision 252 of 15 July 1998 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan, new sections have been established in "Uzbekiston" publishing house, to prepare educational material in national minority languages.

110. In 1995 and 1996, "Uzbekiston" publishing house published textbooks in nature study and Uzbek history. In 1997, 41 textbooks were published by this house in a total of 705,000 copies, as follows:

- In Kazakh: 7 titles, in a total of 172,000 copies;

- In Tajik: 10 titles, in a total of 182,000 copies;

- In Turkmen: 10 titles, in a total of 34,000 copies;

- In Kyrgyz: 10 titles, in a total of 24,000 copies;

- In Russian: 4 titles, in a total of 293,000 copies.

111. In 1997, "Shark" publishing house published six textbooks in Russian, in a total of 300,000 copies.

112. Teaching in all institutes of higher education is conducted in Russian, alongside Uzbek. In addition, teaching is provided in a number of universities through the medium of the following languages:

(a) Kazakh:

- In Tashkent Pedagogical University (yearly intake: 20 students);

- In Gulistan University (yearly intake: 10 students);

- In Navoi Teachers' Training College (yearly intake: 55 students);

- In Nukus Teachers' Training College (yearly intake: 35 students);

- In Tashkent Regional Teachers' Training College (yearly intake: 20 students);

- In Karakalpak State University, for the subject Kazakh language and literature (yearly intake: 15 students);

(b) Tajik:

- In Bukhara University (yearly intake: 15 students);

- In Samarkand University (yearly intake: 60 students);

- In Tashkent Regional Teachers Training College (yearly intake: 25 students);

- In Termez State University;

(c) Turkmen:

- In Karakalpak State University, for the subject Turkmen language and literature (yearly intake: 15 students);

(d) Korean:

- In Tashkent Teachers' Training College (yearly intake: 25 students).

113 Currently, there are 125,483 students enrolled in the country's institutions of higher education. These include the following nationalities: Uzbek - 96,272, Karakalpak - 5,487, Russian - 8,769, Kazakh - 3,529, Kyrgyz - 379, Tajik - 2,472, Turkmen - 505, Jewish - 234, Korean - 2,622, Tatar - 1,337, Ukrainian - 200, Belarusian - 4, Uighur - 36, Greek - 13, Azerbaijani - 81, German - 36, other nationalities - 3,301.

114 In accordance with paragraphs 3 and 4 of the Statute on the procedure for the admission of undergraduate students to the institutions of higher education of the Republic of Uzbekistan (annex 1 to directive 320-F of the Cabinet of Ministers of 4 July 1998), tests are held in three languages: Uzbek, Russian and Karakalpak. The language of instruction in the institution of higher education for the different areas of education and special fields within the indicators of the enrolment exercise, as ratified by decision of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan, shall be determined by ministries and departments before commencement of the submission of documents and shall be ratified by the State Commission. The applicant to the institution of higher education is tested in the language in which his course will be taught. Appropriate tests are set for the different subject areas. For some subjects (special fields), of higher education, supplementary specialized (essay) exams are set, alongside the tests. In institutions of higher education where certain subjects (special fields) are taught through the medium of Tajik, Kazakh or Turkmen, enrolment is based on specialized exams with a points system and on tests. Applications for these subjects (special fields) are accepted only from school-leavers whose secondary schooling was in the corresponding language.

115 Traditionally, textbooks and teaching materials in the above-listed languages are purchased for the institutions of higher education of Uzbekistan in the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States in which those languages are State languages. In recent years, as teaching materials in these languages are no longer being produced in sufficient quantities in the countries themselves, students following courses at Uzbek colleges and universities taught in these languages receive course materials provided by the State at its own cost by duplicating those already available and by developing new materials.

116 The State encourages the enrolment and participation of members of national minorities in the educational system. Thus, by the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan of 13 September 1998 on Awards for Outstanding Services in Education, government awards were conferred on 20 employees of the education system who belong to national minorities.

(vi) The right to equal participation in cultural activities

117 Article 42 of the Constitution establishes that everyone shall be guaranteed the right to enjoy cultural benefits and that the State shall promote the cultural, scientific and technological development of society. These undertakings apply also to physical culture and sport. Under article 2 of the Act on Physical Culture and Sport, citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan, irrespective of sex, age, nationality, creed, and material and social status, shall have the right to

engage in physical culture and sport, to join social organizations of a sport and recreational nature and to be involved in the management of the recreational and sports movement.

118. The members of national minorities are actively involved in all aspects of the cultural life of Uzbekistan without exception. Thus, among those working in the cultural area who received government awards under the presidential decree of 28 August 1988, there were seven members of national minorities, representing almost all spheres of cultural life: the theatre, music, literature and painting.

(f) The right of access to any place or service intended for use by the general public, such as transport, hotels, restaurants, cafes, theatres and parks

119. This right is not specifically flagged in the national legislation of the Republic of Uzbekistan, since it is covered by the principle enshrined in Uzbek law of the equality of all citizens, irrespective of their racial and national affiliation (in particular, the right to freedom of movement, to equal participation in cultural activities, etc.). At the same time, there are no precedents in the legal practice and public life of Uzbekistan of violations of this right.

Article 6

(a) Measures to assure to everyone effective protection and remedies, through the competent national tribunals and other State institutions, against any acts of racial discrimination which violates human rights and fundamental freedoms contrary to this Convention

120. Under article 19 of the Constitution, the citizens' rights and freedoms established by the Constitution and the statutes shall be inalienable and no one shall have the power to deny a citizen his rights and freedoms or to restrict those rights and freedoms except by the sentence of a court.

121. Under article 1 of the Code of Civil Procedure, everyone shall be guaranteed protection by the courts of their rights and freedoms and the right to have legal recourse against unlawful actions by State authorities, officials and public associations and any concerned person shall be entitled, in accordance with the procedure established by law, to apply to the courts for protection of a right which has been violated or contested, or an interest which is protected by the law. A refusal of the right to apply to the courts shall be deemed invalid.

122. In accordance with the Act on legal Recourse against Actions and Decisions Violating the Rights and Freedoms of Citizens, all citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan, irrespective of race or nationality, and also aliens and stateless persons shall be entitled to submit complaints to the courts, if they consider that their rights and freedoms have been breached through the unlawful actions (decisions) of State agencies, enterprises, institutions, organizations, public associations, local authorities or officials (art. 1).

123. In addition to the legal machinery already in existence, institutions have been established in Uzbekistan to provide pre-judicial and extrajudicial protection for human rights. Such institutions include the Parliamentary Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsman) and the National Human Rights Centre of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

124. The Ombudsman's activities are regulated by the Act on the Parliamentary Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsman), under which the Ombudsman's office will complement the existing arrangements for the protection of human rights and freedoms (art. 1). Article 9 states that the Ombudsman will consider complaints from citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan and from aliens and stateless persons in the territory of the Republic of Uzbekistan against actions or the inaction of organizations or officials which infringe their rights, freedoms and lawful interests and that the Ombudsman shall have the right to conduct his or her own inquiry. The Ombudsman will take into consideration complaints from third persons, including public associations, regarding the infringement of the rights, freedoms and lawful interests of a specific person or group of persons on condition that they have given their consent to such consideration. In 1997, the office of the Ombudsman received 2,319 complaints. One third of these complaints (a total of 777), relating to blatant violations of human rights, were monitored and 146 of these have been settled in favour of the petitioner. Monitoring of the consideration of the others is continuing.

125. The complaints received fall into the following categories:

1.	Contestation of court verdicts	586 complaints
2.	Unlawful acts committed by law enforcement personnel	398 complaints
3.	Unwarranted arrest and indictment	253 complaints
4.	Housing and public utilities	197 complaints
5.	Labour issues	126 complaints
6.	Registration issues	97 complaints
7.	Contestation of court decisions concerning housing issues	96 complaints
8.	Social security issues	96 complaints
9.	Changes in restrictive measures	81 complaints
10.	Indexation of cash deposits	64 complaints
11.	Non-execution of court decisions	34 complaints
12.	Violation of the rights of entrepreneurs	25 complaints
13.	Education issues	24 complaints
14.	Medical care of convicts	16 complaints
15.	Other matters	226 complaints

126. On 5 October 1998, the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan held an inter-departmental seminar on issues of the interaction between the Ombudsman and the judicial and law-enforcement authorities in the area of human rights protection and the seminar adopted a resolution containing recommendations on the organization of this activity.

127. The National Human Rights Centre, the main coordinating human rights body, also has two public reception services: one for work with the public and the other a legal advice office, organized together with the Kamolot Fund for the Rights of the Child.

(b) Measures to ensure the right to seek from these tribunals just and adequate reparation of satisfaction for any damage suffered as a result of such discrimination

128. The State body designated to safeguard the above right is the Office of the Procurator of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

129. The work of the Procurator's Office and its subsidiary bodies is designed to ensure the universal supremacy of the law, to strengthen law and order, to provide protection from unlawful encroachment on social, economic, political and individual human rights and freedoms and the rights and freedoms of citizens, and also to uphold State independence, to safeguard the apparatus of society and the State and the political and economic system and to give effect to the rights of the national groups and the territorial formations established in the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan (art. 2 of the Act on the Procurator's Office).

130. The Procurator General of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the procurators subordinate to the Procurator General oversee the scrupulous and uniform implementation of the laws enacted to guarantee social, economic, political and individual human rights and freedoms and the rights and freedoms of citizens (art. 3 of the Act on the Procurator's Office).

131. The Procurator's Office and its subsidiary bodies consider applications and complaints from citizens, receive submissions from State, public and other organizations and take steps to restore violated rights and to protect the lawful interests of citizens and organizations, except where another procedure has been established for the resolution of such issues. The procurators shall receive citizens individually. Where necessary, a procurator shall have the right to delegate to appropriate State administrative, oversight and monitoring authorities or the officials of enterprises, institutions and organizations, the task of verifying proposals, applications and complaints received by him or her and to require them to submit written information on the results of such verification together with all the verification materials (art. 10 of the Act on the Procurator's Office).

132. In 1997, more than 8,000 protests were lodged by the Procurator's Office regarding various unlawful activities. Of these, 2,300 protests related to violations of the labour rights of citizens and 3,000 to unlawful actions by officials. Following intervention by the Procurator's Office and its subsidiary bodies, proceedings for disciplinary and non-indictable offences were instituted against some 1,500 officials.

(c) The practice and decisions of courts and other judicial and administrative bodies relating to cases of racial discrimination

133. Over the period from 1994 to 1997, there are no recorded cases of citizens lodging complaints that their rights had been violated on the basis of racial or ethnic attributes through decisions of the courts or other judicial and administrative bodies.

Article 7

Combating prejudices which lead to racial discrimination and promoting understanding, tolerance and friendship among nations and racial or ethnic groups, as well as propagating the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and this Convention

(a) Education and training

134. Education in the Republic of Uzbekistan has the following forms: pre-school education, general school education, specialized secondary and vocational education, higher education, post-university education, refresher training and retraining of professionals and out-of-school education.

135. In the area of pre-school education, a network of home-based kindergartens and integrated kindergartens and schools is being developed. More than 800 centres have been set up at which children can learn foreign languages, dancing, art and music, as well as basic computing skills. A network of modern schools and general education establishments is being developed. A total of 238 schools specializing in science and technology and 136 specializing in arts subjects are in operation. A number of special programmes are being implemented in such areas as maternal and child health, ethics and knowledge, economic education, rural schooling, rehabilitation of children with special needs and others.

136. The general education schools of Uzbekistan employ more than 435,000 teachers, 73 per cent of whom have higher education.

137. Work has started on the reorganization of vocational and technical education, taking due account of the specific features of the labour market as it has developed in different parts of the country, primarily in rural areas. There are currently 442 educational establishments operating within this system, including 209 vocational schools, 180 schools of science and technology and 53 business schools with a total student complement of 221,000. The establishments for elementary vocational training currently employ about 20,000 teachers and qualified specialists.

138. In Uzbekistan, there are 258 establishments for secondary vocational training, with a total student complement of 197,000. They employ some 16,000 lecturers and technical educational specialists.

139. The college system of Uzbekistan comprises 58 institutions of higher education, including 16 universities, 12 of which were established during the first two years of Uzbekistan's post-independence development, and 42 colleges, with a total student complement of 164,000.

The colleges and universities employ 18,500 lecturers, 52 per cent of whom have PhDs and higher degrees. As part of the reform of the higher education system, the training of professionals is being decentralized and moved to the regions, the network of colleges expanded and their syllabuses widened. Professionals are now being prepared in new branches of science, and the colleges are being converted to a multi-level system.

140. Progressive methods are being introduced for assessing the educational level of school leavers and university students, through the use of tests and a continuous assessment system.

141. To ensure that scientists and science teachers at the higher levels have the better qualifications now required of them, training is provided at postgraduate and post-doctoral levels. A higher certification commission has been established. There are some 4,000 postgraduate students in Uzbekistan, 69 per cent of whom are in the higher education system and 31 per cent in scientific research institutes. Of the total complement of scientists and science teachers, 37 per cent hold PhDs and 8 per cent doctor of science degrees.

142. The system of refresher and retraining courses for professionals encompasses 23 institutes, 16 departments, 4 centres and 14 refresher courses.

143. In August 1997, the National Programme to Promote Legal Literacy was ratified. On 1 September 1997, human rights courses were introduced in all teaching establishments. In May 1998, the Cabinet of Ministers adopted a decision on promoting legal literacy in Uzbek society, which made provision for a multi-tiered programme of legal education, involving virtually all levels of society. A far-reaching campaign of human rights education is being conducted both by the national human rights institutions and by non-governmental organizations.

144. In accordance with article 2 of the Statute on State Educational Standards (annex I to decision 5 of 5 January 1998 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan), the introduction of State educational standards is designed to promote the attainment of such goals as strengthening the democratic values, raising the humanitarian awareness and boosting the legal and economic knowledge of students, as well as enhancing the efficiency of the educational process, ensuring the high quality of the education provided, protecting the interests of the individual, of society and of the State in the area of education and professional training, etc.

145. The National Human Rights Centre has produced more than 15 popular publications on human rights, intended for different age-groups, and provides free legal consultations not only in the city of Tashkent but also in the regions.

146. With financial support from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the project on democratization, human rights and governance in Uzbekistan, the Centre has issued a series of nine posters on the following subjects: the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (in Uzbek and Russian, 10,000 copies); the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (two posters of 5,000 copies each, in Uzbek); the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (two posters, 5,000 copies each, in Uzbek); the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (two posters, 5,000 copies each, in Uzbek); and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (two posters, 5,000 copies each, in Uzbek).

147. There are plans to publish the text of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in the near future. The posters are distributed, free of charge, to schools and institutions of higher education and to the staff of law enforcement agencies and local authorities in all regions of the country.

148. The National Human Rights Centre has issued, in Uzbek, the International Bill of Human Rights, in a printing of 3,000 copies, and a compilation of 38 international human rights instruments to which Uzbekistan is party, including, in pride of place, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

149. In addition, the texts of international human rights instruments are being issued, as separate booklets, by the Centre for the Study of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law, with financial support from UNHCR.

150. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the international human rights instruments form the basis for the course on human rights, introduced with effect from the 1997-1998 academic year as an obligatory subject in all the schools and universities of Uzbekistan. The course was developed by the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Special Education, together with the National Human Rights Centre.

151. As teaching aids for the course, the syllabus and a textbook on human rights were issued in Uzbek (in a printing of 10,000 copies), as well as a set of 12 booklets in Uzbek and Russian, explaining the core provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the international human rights norms as incorporated in the national legislation of Uzbekistan.

152. These publications are distributed free of charge by the National Human Rights Centre to the educational establishments, law enforcement agencies, local authorities and non-governmental organizations of Uzbekistan. Two of these booklets - one on the national human rights programme of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the other on democratization, human rights and governance in Uzbekistan - were disseminated to the 250 deputies of the Oliy Majlis, with financial support from the project on democratization, human rights, and governance in Uzbekistan. With support from this project, the National Human Rights Centre has also set up its own Web site on human rights in Uzbekistan.

153. Over the period from December 1997 to December 1998, the National Human Rights Centre, as part of the project on democratization, human rights and governance in Uzbekistan, conducted 23 seminars and two national conferences, with the participation of the project's international experts, in Tashkent, Margilan, Navoi, Bukhara, Samarkand, Fergana and Nukus. More than 1,500 persons participated in these awareness-raising and educational measures.

154. In addition, eight representatives of national human rights institutions have received training at the International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization (ILO) in Turin, Italy. The training programme also included lectures on the procedure for preparing national reports on implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

155. Seminars were held on problems relating to incorporation of the norms and principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and of the other international human rights

instruments in the national legislation of Uzbekistan and in the work of law enforcement agencies, and on how to guarantee the independence of the judiciary and strengthen the legal system as instruments for the protection of human rights.

156. Under the memorandum of understanding between the Government of Uzbekistan and the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), three courses on human rights were held in 1998 with the participation of experts from ODIHR, attended by some 150 representatives of the judicial and law enforcement authorities of both Uzbekistan and other countries in central Asia.

157. On 27 October 1998, a round table was held to discuss inter-religious and inter-ethnic relations among citizens in sovereign Uzbekistan, organized by the "Ijtimoiy Fikr" Public Opinion Centre, the National Human Rights Centre, the Office of the Ombudsman and the International Cultural Centre of the Republic of Uzbekistan, with the participation of the journal Obshchestvennoe mnenie ("Public Opinion"). The round table was addressed by representatives of national cultural centres, sociologists and representatives of the national authorities.

158. At the same time, it must be conceded that by no means all avenues for education and training in the area of racial and ethnic tolerance have been explored. A potential area for such work is in the lower and middle classes of schools, which are not covered by the human rights syllabus. In addition, special courses must be developed on the subject of tolerance and increased efforts made to propagate national harmony through the existing course on spiritual and educational values.

(b) Culture

159. Currently, there are more than 30 national cultural centres and associations in operation in Uzbekistan. The process of registering national cultural centres began in 1989 and is still under way, with some 50 per cent of those centres having been registered in 1993 and 1994. More than 45 per cent of the national cultural centres have branches; those with the most branches are the National Kazakh Cultural Centre and the Association of Korean Cultural Centres. The Russian, Korean, Jewish and German cultural centres are the most extensive, in terms of the distribution of their branches.

National cultural centres

Cultural centre	Founded	Branches	Circles	Publications	Links abroad
1. Russian	1994	19	+	+	+
2. Polish	1990	4	+	-	+
3. Ukrainian	1994	3	+	+	+
4. German	1990	5	+	-	+
5. Armenian	1989	4	+	+	-
6. Crimean Tatar	1997	1	+	-	+
7. Tatar	1997	1	+	-	-
8. Jewish	1988	7	+	+	+
9. Korean	1991	24	+	+	+

+ Active in this area. - Not active in this area.

160. The establishment and activities of the cultural centres of the minority peoples of Uzbekistan are an encouragement to the members of those national minorities at all levels of society and help promote the movement to revive and preserve their ethnic and cultural traditions and identity. The activities of the national cultural centres are coordinated by the International Cultural Centre of the Republic of Uzbekistan and they play an important role in involving national minorities in the process of restructuring the political, economic and cultural life of Uzbekistan's multi-ethnic society. Thus, on 13 March 1998, a round table was held in Tashkent to discuss prospects for cooperation among the national cultural centres and trades unions for the purpose of strengthening ethnic harmony.

161. The cultural centres maintain extensive links with their ethnic homelands, through close contacts with various artistic associations and other cultural and educational organizations, ministries of culture, institutions of higher education, parliaments and business circles.

162. Among the cultural centres in Uzbekistan, the Russian Cultural Centre, founded in 1994, has a rather special place. This is because the Russian language and culture have been adopted by the representatives of many nationalities resident in Uzbekistan. Members of the Russian Cultural Centre maintain ties with business circles and public associations in Russian cities for the purpose of cultural and business cooperation. Since 1994, contacts have been established with such public associations of Russia as the "Slovene" ("Slavs") International Association, the International Fund for Slavonic Literature and Culture, the Russian Club, the Slavonic Fund of Russia and the "Rodnye prostory" ("Home Expanses") Association. In June 1995, an art exhibition under the title "The Slavonic world through the eyes of artists" was organized with the assistance of the Russian Cultural Centre. On 4 June 1996, a festival was held in the Russian Cultural Centre on the occasion of the Day of Slavonic Literature.

163. Other national cultural centres are also busy establishing international contacts. Thus, the "Batkivshchyna" ("Homeland") Ukrainian Cultural Centre has established contacts with the Ministry of Culture of Ukraine, the Kiev Academy of Arts and the Kiev Theatre Institute. In 1997, representatives of the Ukrainian Cultural Centre of Uzbekistan were invited to participate in the Second World Ukrainian Congress. In 1998, a delegation from the cultural centre took part in the conclave of the Ukrainian World Coordinating Council.

164. The Kazakh National Centre also maintains close links with its fellow countrymen in Kazakhstan and other countries. It represented the Kazakh diaspora of the Republic of Uzbekistan at the World Kazakh Forum, held in Almaty in autumn 1992. The Kazakh National Centre played an important role in the 1995 celebrations of the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the great Kazakh poet and luminary, Abai Kunanbaev, held on the initiative of UNESCO. The Kazakh Cultural Centre has been in operation since 1989. Its main task is the teaching of the Kazakh language. Currently, there are 10 schools in the area where Kazakh is taught.

165. The Korean Cultural Centre has firm ties with the Republic of Korea. With assistance from the Republic of Korea, a training centre was set up five years ago, to prepare teachers of Korean. Also with assistance from the Republic of Korea, a faculty of Korean studies was opened at the Tashkent State Institute of Oriental Studies. In February 1995, a festival of Korean folk art was held in Tashkent, with the participation of performing groups from Uzbekistan,

Belarus, Kyrgyzstan and other ccuntries of the Commonwealth of Independent States. On 19 August 1995, a festival of Korean folklore was held in Soldatskoe settlement in Tashkent region, to celebrate the fourth anniversary of the independence of Uzbekistan. In November 1997, an exhibition was held on the theme "Uzbekistan - our shared home", in the central exhibition hall in Tashkent, to mark the sixtieth anniversary of the Korean community in Uzbekistan.

166. Other national cultural centres are also operating in the Republic. These include the Megobroba ("Friendship") Georgian National Cultural Centre, with branches in Djizak and Samarkand regions and in the Fergana valley, and the Svitanak ("Dawn") Belarusian Cultural Centre, which were opened in 1995.

167. Ties of this kind between the members of the different nations and nationalities of Uzbekistan and their ethnic homelands help them preserve their national culture, language and traditions and remain connected with their roots. They also help strengthen cooperation between the peoples of Uzbekistan and those of foreign countries. Thus, over the period from March to July 1998, five friendship associations were established with six countries, which are the historical homelands for many of the national minorities of Uzbekistan, namely: Azerbaijan, Russia, Georgia, Latvia, Ukraine and Poland. Between November 1997 and November 1998, days of culture of Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan were held in Uzbekistan.

168. An important role in the promotion of tolerance is played by the campaign to publicize the traditions of the Great Silk Road, which, in ancient and medieval times, connected the peoples of the east and the west. In November 1998, on the initiative of the "Rabat Malik" Association of Explorers and the newspaper Solnyshko ("Little Sun"), and with support from Uzbektourism, the national tourism company, an expedition of schoolchildren, scholars, teachers and journalists was mounted along the route of the ancient Silk Road. The purpose of the expedition was to study the culture of the peoples of the Fergana valley: the Uzbeks, Tajiks, Uighurs, Kyrgyz and others.

(c) Press

169. The notions of tolerance and ethnic harmony are widely publicized through the mass media. Newspapers and journals are published in 11 different languages in Uzbekistan, including national publications in 7 languages: Uzbek, Tajik, Turkmen, Russian, English, Arabic and Korean; regional publications in 2 languages: Uzbek and Russian; and, in the Republic of Karakalpakstan, also in Karakalpak. Information on the human rights situation is published both in national organs and in specialized publications devoted to these issues, such as: the journal Pravo ("Law"), in Uzbek; the newspaper Pravo i zhizn ("Law and life"), in Uzbek; the bulletin of the National Human Rights Centre and the bulletin of the non-governmental organizations of Uzbekistan, both in Russian. The newspaper Edinstvo ("Unity"), published by the International Cultural Centre of the Republic of Uzbekistan, carries articles about the national minorities of the country.

170. Three channels of Uzbek television devote a considerable amount of broadcasting time to programmes in Russian. A fourth international channel also broadcasts weekly programmes in the languages of the other minorities: "Umid" ("Hope"), in Uighur; "Rangi kamon"

("Rainbow"), in Tajik; "Zamandas" ("Contemporary"), in Kazakh; "Biznen miras" ("Our heritage"), in Tatar; and "Chinsen" ("Friendship"), in Korean. Radio Grande regularly runs phone-in programmes for listeners, in Uzbek and Russian, on the issue of human rights protection in Uzbekistan.

171. In August 1998, the newspaper Solnyshko, together with the National Human Rights Centre of the Republic of Uzbekistan, ran a children's competition on the theme "Children's world and their rights", to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The competition had four rounds, each of which included a number of questions on the Convention on the Rights of the Child and an additional task. Entrants also submitted short stories, essays, poems, crosswords, photographs, video entries and artefacts made from natural materials. The winners received their awards in March 1999.

172. The need to strengthen the role of the media in promoting and publicizing human rights is a regular item on the agenda of meetings and seminars at all levels.

173. On 14 March 1997, the National Human Rights Centre organized an international conference on the theme "Law and the media", covering both theory and practice, to consider the draft acts on the protection of the professional activities of journalists and on the freedom of access to information. The conference was organized by the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the National Human Rights Centre, the State Press Committee and the Social and Political Foundation for the Support and Democratization of the Mass Media of Uzbekistan. The conference was attended not only by jurists and journalists interested in this legislation, but also by representatives of foreign and international organizations and members of the diplomatic corps, rendering the deliberations more interesting and constructive in improving the draft legislation under consideration.

174. On 24 December 1997, as part of a joint project by OSCE-ODIHR and the Uzbek Government, the National Human Rights Centre held a meeting to discuss the draft act on the media. The meeting was attended by representatives of public associations and by journalists. The participants made a number of constructive suggestions relating to various articles of the draft act. The point most widely made by participants was that any type of censorship and monopoly (above all, by the State) over the media was unacceptable.

175. In August 1998, a seminar on the role of the media and non-governmental organizations in human rights protection was held in the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan, with the participation of members of the Expert Council and staff from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, as well as representatives of the law enforcement agencies, non-governmental organizations and the media. The seminar addressed the issue of interaction between the Ombudsman and the media and considered the Ombudsman's recommendations relating to the protection of citizens' rights. It was pointed out at the seminar that Uzbek journalists do not always know the existing laws which regulate their activities and, as a result, are not always able to do their work in an objective manner.